companies of Coal India Limited for suspension of operation in a phased manner. The lacation of these mines, company-wise and State-wise, and reasons for suspension are as under:-

| Company | West Bengal | Jharkhand | Reasons for the proposed suspension of operation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eastern Coalfields Ltd. | 23 | 3 | Economically unviable |
| Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. | — | 15 | Economically unviable |
| Central Coalfields Ltd. | — | 12 | Economically unviable |
| TOTAL: | 23 | 30 | |

However Government have stated on several occasions that workmen will not be retrenched on account of closure of mines or suspension of mining operations but will be suitably redeployed.

**P.F. office in Godavarikhani in Andhra Pradesh**

1393. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open a Provident Fund office in Godavarikhani in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh, for the benefit of Singareni Coal Company Ltd.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The decision of shifting the Coal Mines Provident Fund (CMPF) regional office from Hyderabad to Godavarikhani was taken by the Board of Trustees, Coal Mines Provident Fund in its 126th Meeting held on 23.3.1999. Accordingly, CMPF Management initiated action to shift the office. However, the aggrieved employees of the CMPF regional office of Hyderabad filed a Writ Petition before the Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad and the Court has granted a stay on shifting of

office to Godavarikhani. The matter is still *subjudice.* Efforts are being made to expedite a decision by the Court.

**Waiving off of arrears of retired Army, Navy and Air Force Officers**

1394. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to waive off recovery of 'arrears' worth Rs. 1.85 crores ordered by Controller of Defence Accounts, from about 1500 retired officers belonging to Army, Air Force and Navy after Court's intervention, as reported in Pioneer of 19th January, 2003; and

(b) if so, whether responsibility is being fixed for this financial loss coupled with infructuous expenditure incurred on court cases?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The retrospective application of Government orders dated 31 st January , 1991 on pay fixation of re-employed officers with effect from 1 st January, 1986 resulted in the recoveries. This was, therefore, a systemic error not attributable to negligence or *malafide* on the part of any individual. Hence no responsibility can be fixed for the financial loss.

**Movement of troops to peace-time locations**

1395. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all border troops have moved back to their peace-time locations after more than a year; and

(b) if so, reasons with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The strategic relocation of troops by India is being carried out in a gradual manner without impairing the capacity to respond aggressively and decisively to any emergency and without lowering the vigil in Jammu and Kashmir. Consequently some units and formations have been moved to peace locations.